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The Case of the Anti-Zionists :

A REPLY

by

LEON SIMON

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The Case of the Anti-Zionists:

A REPLY.

THE appearance in rapid succession of four[1] pamphlets directed against Zionism, printed by the same Press and circulated gratis to the same favoured individuals, is a clear indication of concerted action on the part of a small group of Jews who are opposed to Zionism. Yet the pamphlets themselves contain no hint of any avowal of common inspiration or purpose. There is nothing in any of them to show what Society or Association is behind this sudden blossoming of anti-Zionist literature. That is a fact which deserves noting at the outset as betokening a certain unwillingness on the part of these gentlemen to avow openly the obvious truth that they have set their heads together to deal a series of blows at Zionism. It looks as though they would like it to be believed that Sir Philip Magnus, Mr. Claude Montefiore, Mr. Laurie Magnus and Mr. Lucien Wolf have come separately and independently to the conclusion that this is the time to publish an anti-Zionist pronouncement. We do not, of course, suggest that they are deliberately playing a game of that kind; if they had been doing so, they would not have made the unavowed fact of joint action so apparent as it is. But they are clearly trying to get

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[1] Since this reply was written there has reappeared, with a new cover but otherwise without change, a sermon entitled "The Mission of the Jew", which was delivered last Pentecost by the Rev. Ephraim Levine, M.A., at the New West End Synagogue, and was printed shortly afterwards ("with one or two alterations"). This pamphlet bears no name of printer or publisher, but there is evidence of its connection with the present anti-Zionist campaign in the fact that a new print of it is given to the world just at this time, in its external appearance and type, and in the fact that it contains an attack on Zionism and Zionists. This attack, which appears to be dragged in without relevance to the rest of the sermon, shows no trace of any attempt on the part of its author to understand what Zionism is, or to familiarise himself with the most elementary facts about the Jewish problem. We should be paying it an undeserved compliment if we treated it seriously.

the best of both worlds. They wish to produce all the effect of a concerted attack without incurring the odium that might attach to a self-confessed attempt to organise a movement against Zionism.

Another point worthy of note is the fact that none of the four pamphlets has been wholly written for the occasion. Three of the four may aptly be described as "dug-outs." "Jewish Action and Jewish Ideals," by Sir Philip Magnus, Bart., M.P., first appeared in the *Jewish Chronicle* as far back as November 13th, 1891. It is reprinted now with a few foot-notes added. "Nation or Religious Community?" by Claude G. Montefiore, M.A., is a Presidential Address delivered before the Jewish Historical Society of England on December 3rd, 1899, and is reprinted without change from Vol. IV. of the Transactions of that Society. "Zionism and the Neo-Zionists," by Laurie Magnus, M.A. (Temp. Major, Royal Defence Corps), consists in the main of passages from a book published in 1902. Only the remaining pamphlet—"The Jewish National Movement," by Lucien Wolf—which is reprinted without change from the *Edinburgh Review* of April, 1917, is of recent date. (Had Mr. Wolf chosen, like his friends, to resurrect something from the more distant past, he could have reprinted the sympathetic article on Zionism which he wrote for the *Encyclopædia Britannica* in 1903.) Now a pamphlet is not, of course, necessarily less valuable or weighty because it is old. But the reflection inevitably suggests itself that whereas a new Zionist literature has been produced in this country by a group of young writers during the last two years, anti-Zionism is so largely dependent for its controversial output on the resuscitated writings of men who said their say a score of years ago. Where, one is compelled to ask, are the young anti-Zionists? If the aims of Zionism are so dangerous to Judaism, so desperately opposed to the true mission of the Jewish people, and if emancipation and assimilation mark the true line of Jewish progress, why is there not a rally of young and ardent spirits to the cause which Sir Philip Magnus and Mr. Claude Montefiore have championed for so long? We are far from suggesting that the young are necessarily right, and their elders necessarily wrong; but is there not some significance in the fact that the young and forward-looking men, with whom the future is likely to

rest, are inspired by the Zionist ideal to throw their weight on the side of the great body of the Jewish people, while the defence of the opposite point of view is left to the "old guard"?

The four anti-Zionist pamphlets which we are here considering vary greatly in quality. Sir Philip Magnus' *Jewish Chronicle* article is short and superficial, and is pitched in the key of preaching rather than in that of argument. Mr. Claude Montefiore writes like a scholar and a sincere seeker after truth, with whom it is a pleasure to break a lance, because, though his view is in our opinion distorted, it is evidently the truth and nothing but the truth that he desires. Mr. Laurie Magnus is "clever," and writes with an air of superiority which is more amusing than annoying. Mr. Lucien Wolf, with his pretentious and seemingly impartial presentment of a subject with which he betrays but the slightest acquaintance, drags us down to the level of ordinary controversial pamphleteering. In this kind of writing, in which the object is not to enunciate or to ascertain the truth, but simply to score points, Mr. Wolf is a past master; but on this occasion, as we shall show, he has ventured beyond his depth.

Before proceeding to deal with each of the pamphlets in detail, we must allow ourselves a word on the four single-sheet leaflets which accompany them, one in each pamphlet. These leaflets contain quotations from various "authorities," designed to show that Judaism has no political bearing, that Judaism is not a Nationality but a Religion, that Jews can "identify" themselves completely with Englishmen, and so forth. They are of themselves sufficient to discredit the cause which they are meant to establish. Take first the letter on "Zionism at the Universities," which was sent by twenty-five "graduates and members of the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and London" to the *Jewish Chronicle* in April, 1909 (on the occasion of an interview with Mr. Norman Bentwich) and is now reprinted and circulated with Sir Philip Magnus' pamphlet. These twenty-five gentlemen "deeply deplore the statement that Jews are not and can never be, 'entirely English in thought,'" and assert that "when an alien [*i.e.*, presumably an alien Jew] has become naturalised, he is an Englishman in his rights and obligations, and we hold that it is his duty to see to it that his children shall

grow up, as Jews, 'entirely English in thought'—as English in aspiration, interest and zeal as those who are 'descended from ancestors who have mingled their blood with other Englishmen for generations.'" These gentlemen have evidently fallen into an elementary confusion between political duties and aspirations on the one hand and spiritual traditions and ideals on the other. The position of the honest and conscious Jew in a modern state may present some difficulties (theoretical rather than practical), but they can be met when once the facts are honestly recognised. They are not to be solved by shallow sophisms which glide away from the real issues involved. Take, again, the quotations from the late Chief Rabbi's articles in the *Nineteenth Century* (July, 1878, and December, 1881), with which Mr. Montefiore presents his readers. "We are simply Englishmen, or Frenchmen, or Germans, as the case may be, certainly holding particular theological tenets and practising special religious ordinances." Has anybody ever defined the "particular theological tenets" which *all* Jews hold, or found even a bare minimum of "religious ordinances" which *all* Jews obey? "We regard all mankind as brethren." Of course we do; but that recognition of the brotherhood of man is closely bound up with the sense of separateness, with the feeling that a Jew is a Jew, and a non-Jew is a non-Jew. "We regard as apostates those of our fellow-Jews who abandon their faith." This is true if by "abandon their faith" we mean "undergo baptism"; but everybody knows that a Jew may abandon every single article of traditional Jewish belief and practice, and still call himself a Jew and be regarded as a Jew by Jews and Gentiles alike. And so one might take every sentence of the two passages quoted from the late Chief Rabbi's articles, and show that it is either equivocal or irrelevant to his point. But it is with the leaflet enclosed in Mr. Wolf's pamphlet that we reach high-water mark. Here we have the opinions of two Jews whose opinions on Judaism as a religion must really carry weight. They are Signor Luigi Luzzatti, an Italian politician, who has been known, we believe, to extol the Christian Gospels at the expense of the Jewish Law, and M. Joseph Reinach, a French politician, who throughout a long career has maintained scarcely the slenderest connection with Jews and Judaism. These are the teachers, O Israel! These are the men who are

brought forward to tell us that "Judaism is not a Nationality, but a Religion"—two men who, if "religion" were really the test of Judaism, would find it hard to establish their claim to the name of Jew. There is something almost inconceivably fatuous in the use of these two names by men who want to deny that there is anything but a religious bond to unite Jews. One is tempted to believe that Mr. Wolf is having a joke at the expense of his readers. By comparison with this triumph of paradox Mr. Laurie Magnus' achievement in bringing in evidence the President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (1917) pales into insignificance; though it is obvious that a Rabbi who speaks of Rabbis as "messengers of the Lord of Hosts" is so far from understanding the traditional Jewish point of view that he confuses the function of a Rabbi with that of a Prophet. However, it is not to be expected that men who can impress Luzzatti and Reinach into the service of "religion" should have any qualms about an American Rabbi. Of course, this whole system of citing "authorities"—and such "authorities"!—is little better than childish, and is itself one of the best proofs of the poverty of the anti-Zionist case.

We pass now from the leaflets to the four pamphlets, taking them in order of antiquity.

SIR PHILIP MAGNUS' "JEWISH ACTION AND JEWISH IDEALS."

Sir Philip Magnus sets himself to answer the question why it is that the Jews, in whom the desire for a restoration to Palestine has always been so strong, have yet done little or nothing to bring about by their own exertions "the restoration of the political independence, to which so many confidently look forward as the forerunner of the Messianic age."[1] "It might have been thought," he says, "that a people, racially one, united even in dispersion by such ties as a common language, trustworthy traditions, a glorious past, and a sacred mission,

[1] P. 3.

would have been capable of worthier efforts for the restoration of their nationality than any which the history of nearly eighteen centuries records."[1] It is not that the national idea in Judaism is "a vague yearning and nothing more"; if it had been that, we should not have seen "the success that has attended the recent efforts of a few well-meaning agitators to band together numbers of poor Jewish refugees by the hope of a return to Palestine."[2] But the note struck by the Chovevé Zion "vibrated only in the hearts and memories of those who heard it . . . . its vitality was still too feeble to touch the springs of action."[3] Why is this?

By way of answer, Sir Philip Magnus suggests that "the idea is but the mental image of a mission to be otherwise fulfilled."[4] It is the destiny of Israel, "sprung from a single family, which grew into a tribe, to develop into a nation, and ultimately to become a scattered people."[5] The same mission which called the Jews out of Egypt into Palestine called them at a later date out of Palestine into exile. "It may be—who can say?—that Zion will again become the centre of God's cult. But Zion secured by the goodwill of foreign Powers is a vision which no true prophet ever saw."[6] So the Jewish national idea is to be realised in the abandonment of Jewish nationality, and the Jews are to be "witnesses of the Lord," whose "duty is in testifying, by their separate existence, to God's superintending Providence, and by their individual lives to the abiding laws of right and to the essential truths of religion."[7] Of course, the lot of all Jews is not happy. But "it may be for some wise purpose hidden from our view that the heart of the modern Pharaoh has been hardened. . . . As individuals we feel for them [the suffering Jews] and work for them; but . . . beneath their present sorrows we recognise a force urging them to take a fuller part in the great civilising mission assigned to them as Israelites."[8]

It will be noticed that Sir Philip Magnus is a convinced Jewish nationalist. He does not suggest that the Jews are simply a "religious community," but recognises fully the ties

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[1] P. 4. [2] P. 5. [3] Pp. 5, 6. [4] P. 6. [5] *Ib.* [6] Pp. 7, 8. [7] P. 8. [8] Pp. 8, 9.

of " common language," and so forth. The only question on which he differs from the general run of Jewish nationalists is that of the practical consequences which should follow from the recognition of Jewish nationality. Zionists adopt the common-sense view that the right way to preserve a nationality is to find it a home, to secure it so far as possible against disruptive influences. But this is far too simple an idea for Sir Philip Magnus. His view is a much more subtle one. For him Jewish nationality is something so sublime that it can be realised only by being abandoned. Not because Jewish nationality is a false idea, but precisely because it is a true idea, the Jews must refuse to restore their national life in Palestine.

Study of the Talmud is supposed to have produced in the Jewish mind a tendency to super-subtlety ; but Zionists have no reason to fear that the Jewish people will accept Sir Philip Magnus' theory of the obligations of Jewish nationality in preference to their own.

But what, indeed, are the obligations of Jewish nationality according to Sir Philip Magnus ? We look in vain for an answer. We are told that the mission of the Jews is to " testify " by their separate existence to God's providence and by their individual lives to the abiding laws of right, etc. But how is their separate existence to be maintained ? And what is to be the guiding rule of their individual lives ? It seems scarcely conceivable, but Sir Philip Magnus has no word to say in answer to these crucial questions. Yet it is on the answer to these questions that everything depends. You may argue till the end of time whether Jews are or should be a nation or not, whether the business of Jews is to " testify," or to do something else, without getting an inch further. What the plain man wants to know is what is to be done. We have in countries like England an obvious drift away from Judaism, a tendency on the part of the younger generation of Jews to lose hold of their language, of their " trustworthy traditions," of their religion, of everything distinctively Jewish that they can get rid of. We had in Russia at the time when Sir Philip Magnus first wrote his sermon (we have, fortunately, no longer) millions of Jews ground down by persecution and restrictions. What is to be done ? Is the

magic word "testify" sufficient to bring back the indifferent to the fold, and to give the suffering hope and strength to carry on their unequal struggle? And if it is not—as assuredly it is not—how can it be seriously put forward as an alternative to the Zionist ideal, which is to myriads of Jews an incentive to practical and faithful work in the cause of their people?

And this notion of "testifying"—what is there in it of substance? Effective "testifying" needs two parties. It demands not only that certain people "testify," but also that certain other people take note of their testimony. But if the history of the past two thousand years proves anything, it proves that the Jews *as a scattered race* cannot get the necessary hearing from the world. Jewish idealism, Jewish religious faithfulness, Jewish morality, receive scant recognition from the world; but the weaknesses and shortcomings of individual Jews are fastened on and made a reproach to the whole Jewish people. That is an unpleasant fact, but still a fact, not to be charmed out of existence by sanctimonious phrases. And another fact of some relevance is this—that the Jews who talk loudest about "testifying" are not those who are most unswerving in their loyalty to Jewish tradition. The Jew of the Ghetto, always misunderstood and often despised, who bases his whole life on the beliefs and observances of his fathers, does not claim to be "testifying" or "fulfilling a mission." It is the comfortable assimilated Jew who uses these phrases to cover up the emptiness of his own Judaism.

Jewish nationalism demands above all things an honest attempt to understand and to grapple with the complex problems presented by the situation of the Jewish people in the modern world. The Zionist contribution to the solution of those problems may raise difficulties, may be open to criticisms. But at least it is a real attempt at a solution, and it is not affected by platitudes about the "mission" of Jewry. A single breath of reality blows to fragments the unsubstantial fabric of words which Sir Philip Magnus presents to a people weary of exile and longing for a solid foot of earth whereon to live, to grow, to realise the ideals which have preserved it as one people through centuries of persecution and of assimilation.

Mr. CLAUDE MONTEFIORE'S "NATION OR RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY?"

Mr. Montefiore takes us into a very different world. We have in his pamphlet the ideas of a man who has studied and thought, who tries to understand the point of view of those from whom he differs, whose business is not to obscure fundamental divergences of view by ambiguous words. It would be unfair to him to attempt a brief summary of an essay which is full of suggestive ideas; and it is beyond our purpose here to follow and criticise in detail his reading of Jewish history. It must suffice to state the fundamental point of difference between his view and the Zionist view of the proper line of development for Judaism, and to show why in our opinion his view is not the right one.

For Zionists it is an axiom that what Judaism needs most of all at the present time is a new movement of concentration. Throughout Jewish history it is concentration and not diffusion that has preserved the Jewish spirit and the Jewish way of life. What has rendered possible the survival of the Jewish people and of Judaism since the Jewish State was overthrown is the fact that in every period there has been somewhere a strong centre of Jewish life and learning, which has served as a reservoir whence all the scattered sections of Jewry could draw vitality. In Babylon, in Spain, in Germany, and most recently in Poland, such centres have existed. To-day, as a result of various causes which it would take too long to detail here, Jewry is or is coming to be without a centre, and is falling to pieces in consequence; and this disruption of Jewry is inevitably accompanied by a weakening and disintegration of Judaism. Considered in this aspect, the movement for a return to Palestine is the natural reply to this threat to Jewry and Judaism. It means reintegration instead of disintegration; it means the creation of a new unifying force in Jewish life—and a force which will be not only unifying, but also creative, since Palestine has this advantage over all the temporary centres of the exile, that it has an abiding place in the consciousness of the Jew, and is bound up with all that is fundamentally Jewish.

It will be observed that this Zionist attitude postulates an indissoluble connection between the Jewish people and

Judaism; and Mr. Montefiore, we believe, would admit that, when once that postulate is admitted, the Zionist position follows as a matter of course. But he does not admit the postulate, except as an historical fact. He realises that historically Jewry and Judaism have always been associated; but he is impatient of an association which seems to him to hamper Judaism, to prevent it from achieving the empire which is due to it as a universal religion. He wants Judaism to cast off the remnants of tribalism and nationalism, to "take its place among the universal religions of the world,"[1] to compete with Christianity (though he does not say this in so many words) for the soul of the European. That is his alternative to Zionism. There is no juggling with the word "nationalism," no pretending that the way to preserve the Jewish nationality is to destroy it. The Jewish nationality is to go, and Judaism is to remain as one of the universal religions—as the religion of such Englishmen or Frenchmen or Greeks or Jews as may be persuaded to adopt it for the sake of its universal truths.

There is a superficial attractiveness about this ideal of Mr. Montefiore's. To make Judaism no longer the exclusive creed of a despised race, but a faith counting its adherents by millions in every civilised country; no longer tolerated as a quaint survival from the days of tribal religions, but welcomed as a path to salvation by an ever-growing number of gentiles—that is at least an intelligible aim for the Jew, and one which may for a moment seem to make the Jewish struggle worth while, to give meaning and purpose to the long tragedy of Jewish history. But only for a moment. For it is not the Jew in us, but the European, who finds this prospect fascinating. Once look at the vision with Jewish eyes, and it loses its sublimity. The Jewish ideal, the ideal of the Prophets, demands the perpetuation of the Jewish people and the never-ending attempt to embody in its national life the will of God, the law of righteousness; and it sees that attempt ultimately crowned with success, and the nations of the earth coming up of their own accord to do homage to the God of Israel, who is also the God of the universe. Beside that magnificent conception the ideal of Mr. Montefiore—a Judaism

[1] P. 15.

competing for souls, inevitably cheapening its wares to make them acceptable, and content to regard the number of its professed adherents as a measure of its worth—appears mean and petty. The Jewish people has struggled and suffered for the Prophetic ideal. Will it now abandon that ideal for one immeasurably inferior? Assuredly not.

But the sacrifice, even if it could be made, would be made in vain. For this notion of Judaism as a world-religion, divested of its historical and national associations, is a mere chimera. It is possible to construct in thought an abstract Judaism, no longer bound up with Jewish history and national consciousness, but yet differing in its religious tenets and its moral outlook from Christianity. But the only Jews who want a Judaism of that kind are those whose outlook is already penetrated through and through with conceptions derived from Christianity. Of this truth Mr. Montefiore is himself a conspicuous example. Writings of his later in date than the address here in question reveal his sympathies as lying on the side of Christianity where there is a conflict between Jewish and Christian conceptions. He is on the Christian side in tending to shift the centre of authority from the impersonal law to the heart of the individual; in preferring altruistic love to impartial justice as the foundation of ethical conduct; in regarding marriage as an indissoluble sacramental covenant rather than as a human institution; and so forth.[1] In fact, his whole conception of what "religion" is reflects Christian and not Jewish ideas. In saying this we are far from impugning the reality or the sincerity of Mr. Montefiore's Jewishness. His conspicuous services to *his people*—the Jewish people—would sufficiently dispose of any such suggestion. But the new wine which he wishes to pour into Jewish bottles is Christian wine; and if the future of Judaism were left in the hands of those who think and feel as he does, Judaism might, indeed, become "one of the universal religions of the world," but it would do so by becoming indistinguishable in essentials from the dominant religion of Europe.

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[1] On Mr. Montefiore's attitude to Christianity see Achad ha-Am's essay, "Judaism and the Gospels" (English translation in the *Jewish Review*, Vol. I., pp. 203-229.)

Mr. LAURIE MAGNUS' "ZIONISM AND THE NEO-ZIONISTS."

Mr. Laurie Magnus' contribution to the anti-Zionist campaign may be dismissed with a very few words. On the positive side he has nothing to offer except the platitudes about "serving some divine end" and being "a witness and a priest" with which his father has already regaled us. On the negative side he gives us little more than a discursive and rather flippant criticism of certain Zionist utterances, which is partly justified but is wholly irrelevant to the real question. His method is very simple. Assume that modern Zionism is concerned with nothing more important than the establishment of a "Jewish State" as an end in itself: set over against this purely imaginary conception of Zionism one or two flaming passages from Isaiah: and the overthrow of Zionism is complete. There is no need for understanding or for logic. "We are"—so Mr. Laurie Magnus interprets the demands of Zionism—"we are to be citizens of the country in which we live; we are to be members of the State of Palestine; we are to cherish the Zion of Hebrew hopes."[1] Obviously no Zionist can ever have imagined that any individual Jew would be at one and the same time a citizen of the Jewish State and a citizen of another State. But what does it matter, so long as the "neo-Zionists" are soundly rated by this self-appointed spokesman of the "orthodox Jew"?

This sort of stuff may have been excusable fifteen years ago, when Zionism was little understood in this country, and when also the Zionist movement itself had not reached equilibrium, and it was possible, by fastening on isolated Zionist utterances which did less than justice to the fundamental realities of Zionism, to seem to convict the movement out of the mouths of its own champions of having a narrow horizon and being dependent on unstable political combinations. But the last two years—to go back no further—have produced a Zionist literature in the English language, in which he who runs may read that Zionists do not regard a Jewish State as an end in itself, that they care little about a Jewish State as such, that

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[1] P. 11.

their concern is about a stable home for the Jewish people and for Judaism, where the Jewish people may be able once more to prove itself worthy of the glorious vision of Isaiah. Mr. Magnus has either read that literature, or he has not. If he has, his failure to take account of it is inexcusable. If he has not, it must be left to him to formulate canons of controversy which will justify him in attacking a movement without taking the trouble to find out what it has to say for itself.

Mr. LUCIEN WOLF'S "THE JEWISH NATIONAL MOVEMENT."

In Mr. Lucien Wolf Zionism has a more dangerous opponent than any of his three collaborators, because he is more dexterous than they and more determined to "dish" Zionism at all costs. His method is highly ingenious. He sets out apparently to give a sympathetic account of the Jewish national movement, and it is only when he is well on the road that we discover his real motive—which is to advance certain well-worn arguments against Zionism under the guise of an historical study. The pamphlet, for all its parade of learning and objectivity, betrays ignorance of the subject and is full of misrepresentations. This may seem a serious charge to level against a writer of Mr. Wolf's distinction, but we shall have no difficulty in substantiating it—the difficulty will lie rather in so limiting our choice of examples as not to tire the reader.

(1) To begin with, Mr. Wolf shows himself by his silence entirely ignorant of the considerable body of modern Hebrew literature in which the ideas of Jewish nationalism were developed and crystallised. He does not mention Krochmal or Lilienblum or Smolenskin; he refers to Achad ha-Am only in a footnote, in connection with Pinsker's *Auto-Emancipation*. This ignorance is itself sufficient to rob his account of the Jewish national movement of any value. What should we say of a writer who set out to give an account of the Polish national movement in entire (though unconfessed) ignorance of the Polish literature on the subject?

(2) Mr. Wolf shows not the slightest understanding of the real forces of Jewish nationalism. He tells us, for instance,

that in the struggle between Yiddish and Hebrew "The Yiddishists, of course, won," and that their victory "was not without a certain formal sanction, for in 1903, at a conference of ardent young Yiddish intellectuals, held at Czernowitz, Yiddish was solemnly proclaimed the Jewish national language."[1] There is something delightfully naive in the notion that Hebrew can cease to be the national language because the "Yiddishists" say that it is not, and that any pronouncement of the Czernowitz conference, or of any other conference, could affect the question one way or the other. The fact is that, while Yiddish is of course much more widely used as a spoken language than Hebrew, its claim to be "the national language" of the Jewish people is simply grotesque. Large sections of the Jewish people never have known Yiddish; large sections turn their backs on it as soon as they can acquire a European language. Hebrew not only remains the one language in which all Jews as such have a share; it is also becoming more and more a language of life. Mr. Wolf's statement that "Hebrew remains the linguistic luxury of their [the Zionists'] elect"[2] shows that he is ignorant of the immense strides made by living Hebrew during the last generation. There are—or were before the war—scores of Hebrew periodicals, daily as well as weekly and monthly; and in Palestine—which, though Mr. Wolf does not seem to know it, is the centre of the Jewish national movement—Hebrew is the mother-tongue of the younger generation of Jews. The "Yiddishists" are a few misguided enthusiasts who object to Hebrew because they object to Jewish nationalism. They are inspired not by love of Yiddish, but by fear of Hebrew. The truth is that the Bundists, whom Mr. Wolf represents as the real Jewish nationalists, are thorough-going assimilants, using Yiddish because it is in fact the language of the Jewish masses, but opposed to Palestine, to Hebrew, to everything that has a national value for Jews. At the recent All-Russia Jewish Conference, attended by over five hundred delegates, a resolution embodying the Jewish claim to Palestine was adopted all but unanimously—the only dissentients being some three dozen Bundist delegates, who left the meeting in protest. That is a measure both of the "nationalist" attitude of the Bund and

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[1] Pp. 8, 9. [2] P. 9.

of the extent to which it represents the mind of Russian Jewry.

(3) Mr. Wolf pays a good deal of attention to Pinsker's pamphlet *Auto-Emancipation*, which is one of the three works mentioned at the head of his essay. "Pinsker," he says, ". . . . does not even mention Palestine. He . . . . even recognises the patent absence of Jewish national consciousness as a formidable obstacle to the realization of his plan."[1] This is what Pinsker actually says :—

> The national consciousness, which formerly existed only in the latent condition of a barren martyrdom, manifested itself before our eyes in the masses of the Russian and Rumanian Jews in the form of an irresistible movement towards Palestine.

In this sentence Pinsker both mentions Palestine and shows that he recognises the existence of a Jewish national consciousness which is bound up with Palestine. Mr. Wolf, therefore, is actually ignorant of the contents of a pamphlet which he himself picks out as one of the important works on his subject.

So far as to the extent and accuracy of Mr. Wolf's knowledge. We proceed now to give a few instances from his pamphlet of half- truths which are calculated to produce a false impression in the minds of those who do not know the facts.

(1) "The Jews," he writes, "were always primarily, and above everything else, a religious community, and their national life in Palestine was only a phase, a social expedient, of their greater history as a Church."[2] Mr. Wolf must know very well—if he did not, Mr. Montefiore could have told him—that the early history of the Jewish people was cast in a time when the modern distinction between "nation" and "religious community" did not exist. But in saying that "the Jews were always primarily . . . . . a religious community" he is trying to suggest to the unlearned that even in the days of

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[1] P. 6. [2] P. 2.

their full national life the Jews were somehow distinguished from other contemporary nations by the fact that their cohesion was based on religion. That is not the fact. The cohesion of the Edomites or the Moabites was based on religion neither less nor more than that of the Jews. The Jews differed from these other nations in having a purer national religion, not in being a Church as opposed to a nation. And to anybody who knows Jewish history it is almost superfluous to point out that at no period could the House of Israel be adequately described by the term "Church" in its modern sense.

(2) Mr. Wolf of course makes much of Napoleon's Great Sanhedrin, and he says that "even in Eastern Europe . . . . scarcely a word of protest was heard" against its anti-nationalist declaration.[1] He would have his readers infer that the Jewries of Eastern Europe somehow acquiesced in the abandonment of Jewish nationality. That is absurd. Representatives of the Jews in certain western countries (not including England) met in the Sanhedrin and accepted, under duress, certain formulæ which were held to make Judaism compatible with citizenship.[2] Their resolutions, which were or seemed to be necessitated by their own political exigencies, could not touch in any way the realities of Judaism, and could not have any interest for the Jewish masses in Eastern Europe, whose circumstances were entirely different. And in any case, the Jewish masses were not then organized, and had no representative body through which they could have protested even if the necessity for a protest could have entered their heads.

(3) Mr. Wolf says that the Zionists "eventually found that they could not oppose" "the principle of self-government and equal rights for all nationalities" (in Russia).[3] Mr. Wolf surely knows that the recognition of that principle is not a concession wrung from Zionists, but is a natural consequence

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[1] P. 4.

[2] Mr. Wolf attaches exaggerated importance to the resolutions of the Sanhedrin, which attracted very little attention until they were resuscitated by the Jewish "reformers" in Germany. See Mr. H. Sacher's pamphlet "Jewish Emancipation: The Contract Myth" (English Zionist Federation, 1917), p. 15.

[3] P. 12.

of the Zionist point of view. But what Zionists maintain is that the claim for Jewish national rights in Russia is a local matter, whereas the demand for a national centre in Palestine touches the whole of Jewry.

(4) Zionists "declare," says Mr. Wolf, "that, where emancipation does not exist, it is not worth striving for, and, where it does exist, it is no remedy."[1] This is a gross travesty of the Zionist view that emancipation has not solved and cannot solve the Jewish problem. Zionists do not maintain anything so absurd as that emancipation is not worth striving for.

We could multiply examples, but enough has been said to substantiate our charge of ignorance and misrepresentation. And be it remembered that Mr. Wolf's essay was written originally not for Jewish readers in particular, but for the readers of the *Edinburgh Review*, who might be expected not to have such acquaintance with the subject as would enable them to detect his ignorance and discount his half-truths.[2]

With that we may safely leave Mr. Wolf. Any fair-minded student of Zionism will know how much weight to attach to the suggestion of such an opponent that Zionist doctrines "may be calculated to wreck whatever chances of liberty and happiness there may be . . . . for the seven millions of unhappy Jews in Eastern Europe."[3] Indeed, the absurdity of that suggestion has since been proved conclusively by the emancipation of the Jews in free Russia, one effect of which has been to give a great impetus to Zionism in Russian Jewry.

CONCLUSION.

(A) WHAT ZIONISM IS NOT.

We have now reviewed the case against Zionism as presented by these four opponents, and have found that it rests with Sir Philip Magnus on a sublime disregard of the realities of the

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[1] Pp. 13, 14.

[2] The present writer, having heard Mr. Wolf's essay delivered as a lecture, and having learnt that it was to be published in the *Edinburgh*, asked the editor of that Review for permission to submit an article setting Zionism in its true light; but the Editor replied that, having accepted Mr. Wolf's article, he could not print another in the opposite sense.

[3] P. 14.

Jewish position, with Mr. Montefiore on a desire to get rid of the national elements in Judaism, with Mr. Laurie Magnus on refusal or inability to understand Zionism, and with Mr. Lucien Wolf on ignorance partly real and partly assumed. It is fitting that in conclusion we should attempt a clear statement of Zionist aims, so as to leave no further excuse (if any existed before) for misunderstanding and misrepresentation. And first it is necessary to clear the ground by stating what Zionism is not.

Zionism does not regard the creation of certain political conditions in Palestine as an end in itself. Political action is for Zionism a means, not an end.

Zionism does not regard the establishment of a "Jewish State" in Palestine as a necessary means to the attainment of its aims. Even Herzl, whose use of the term *Judenstaat* has given rise to so much misunderstanding on this point, did not demand such conditions as are suggested to English minds by the phrase "Jewish State." This is, in substance, what Herzl said in a Committee on the Programme of the First Zionist Congress in 1897:

> "People did not understand even the title of the pamphlet [Der Judenstaat]. I did not propose *einen jüdischen Staat* (a Jewish State), but I proposed to give the territory the name 'Judenstaat' (Jews' State). Had I wanted a State like all other states of the world, I would have labelled it as 'ein jüdischer Staat', but I did not dream of making it like any other State. I was thinking of a Jewish territory, well protected and well organized, run by a modern Company on the lines of national and progressive colonization. Such territory I would call 'Judenstaat,' but it was far from my mind to compete with the existing empires, kingdoms or republics by the creation of a new sort of kingdom. All the protests against this non-existent idea are mere claptrap. We want a Jewish *Gemeinwesen* (Commonwealth) with all securities for freedom."[1]

Zionism does not contemplate the establishment in Palestine of any control by Jews to the detriment of the rights of any other nationality or religious sect.

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[1] See Mr. Nahum Sokolow's article, "How the Basle Programme was made," in the *Zionist Review*, October, 1917.

Zionism does not demand of any Jew a double political allegiance, and does not threaten in any way the political rights enjoyed by Jews in countries other than Palestine. Zionists have never suggested that Palestine could claim the political allegiance of a Jew who chose to live outside Palestine as a citizen of this or that State; and the rights of citizenship enjoyed by Jews in various countries would be in no way affected by the fact that a larger or smaller number of Jews owed no political allegiance except that which sprang from their being members of the Hebrew national settlement in Palestine.

Zionism does not aim essentially at relieving the economic situation of the Jewish masses. The opening-up of Palestine to extensive Jewish immigration should have beneficial economic consequences for those Jews who at present suffer from overcrowding and excessive competition; but those consequences would be a by-product of Zionism, and even if immigration into Palestine were so gradual that the large Jewish centres were not sensibly relieved, the real aims of Zionism could still be accomplished.

Zionism is not simply a reflex of anti-Semitism; it is not simply an attempt to remove or mitigate the evils of anti-Semitism; and its success will not necessarily obliterate anti-Semitism. The sufferings of the Jews have naturally been one of the motive forces of Zionism, but they are not the deepest or the most abiding motive force, nor is the desire to escape from anti-Semitism or from persecution the most potent incentive to effort for the re-establishment of Jewish national life in Palestine. And since the existence of anti-Semitism depends not only on the position of the Jews, but also on the prevalent state of mind and feeling among gentiles, it follows that the re-establishment of Jewish national life cannot be an infallible cure for the evils of anti-Semitism. Recognition of this fact is of course quite consistent with a belief that the accomplishment of the aims of Zionism will at least mitigate those evils by removing or diminishing one or more of the contributory causes of anti-Semitic prejudice.

(B) WHAT ZIONISM IS.

What, then, is Zionism? What is its underlying idea? What are its practical aims?

The underlying idea of Zionism is that of Jewish nationality. But when Zionists say that the Jews are a "nation" and not a "religious community," they do not discard a great spiritual heritage for a dubious political future, or offer the birthright of Jewish ideals in exchange for a diplomatic mess of pottage, or attempt to transfer Jewish allegiance from the God of Israel to a petty State. They simply reject, as shallow and unhistorical, the newfangled philosophy of Judaism which would have us believe that, because numbers of Jews have acquired citizenship in western countries, and have adopted the speech, the manners and the habits of western peoples, therefore the spiritual heritage of Israel can be or ought to be whittled away to the religion of a sect of Englishmen or Frenchmen. They reassert the old conception of the unity of Israel as an ethnic group whose life and value depend on the vitality of those ideals for which and by virtue of which it has struggled on through thousands of years of varying fortune.

That, in baldest outline, is the theory of Zionism. Its practice follows naturally from that theory. In practice, Zionism aims at combating those forces which make for the disruption of the unity of Israel by a new movement of concentration, building upon that sentiment with which the Jewish sense of unity, the Jewish group-sense, is most indissolubly connected—the love of Palestine. The Jewish love of Palestine differs from the love of any other nation for its country in that it is felt by individuals who have no personal contact with Palestine, who visualise it not as hill and vale and meadowland, but as the source of their spiritual being and the goal of their people's wanderings, as the Holy Land and the Land of Promise. But Palestine as a spiritual centre and Palestine as the actual home of Jewish national life are not inconsistent conceptions; rather the one is the necessary complement of the other. To-day it is more apparent than ever that Palestine as a symbol of the past and a hope for the distant future no longer retains its empire over the Jewish heart and mind so fully as to be an effective guarantee of the unity of Israel. It is,

or is becoming, a spent force. It needs the reinforcement, the new impulse, that only actuality can give. Palestine has to become once again the home of the Jewish people—in idea the home of the whole Jewish people, in concrete fact the home of a settlement of Jews strong enough in numbers, in energy, in character, in idealism, to build up a commonwealth in which all that is distinctive of the Jewish type will have free play, and which will stand for the scattered hosts of Israel and for the world at large as the pattern and exemplar of Jewish life and Jewish civilization.

How are the foundations of such a commonwealth to be laid ?

Obviously, the first requisite is a solid material basis. The Jewish inhabitants of Palestine, reinforced so far as necessary by immigration from other countries, and aided so far as necessary by Jewish capital from other countries, must till the soil of Palestine, develop its neglected resources, discover and turn to account the commercial and industrial possibilities which it offers. But that is not all. All that might be done, and yet nothing be done. A commonwealth of Jews is not necessarily a Jewish commonwealth, even if it consist of a million or five million Jews who are economically prosperous and socially and politically free. A Jewish commonwealth must find its principle of cohesion and its justification not merely in the economic or the political sphere, but in the sphere of sentiment and ideals. Let those who lay the foundations of the commonwealth feel themselves to be the custodians of Israel's cherished traditions and hopes ; let them be inspired by the consciousness that they are restoring their nation to life and vigour in its ancestral land, reviving its ancient language, and re-creating its civilization under modern conditions—and the commonwealth of Jews becomes a Jewish commonwealth, secure of its power, sooner or later, to serve as a centre of attachment for the whole of Jewry and a source of renewed vitality for Judaism.

Zionism, then, is concerned not only with the material possibilities of Palestine, but also with the spiritual capabilities of the Jewish people. Are there in Jewry men of the right type who will go to Palestine to lay the foundations of the Jewish

commonwealth, or who, unable to go themselves, will help the work each in his own place and his own way? The experience of the last generation makes it possible to answer this question unhesitatingly in the affirmative. In Palestine itself some forty Jewish agricultural and urban settlements have been founded, and have struggled through their early difficulties to a fair measure of prosperity; and the pioneer settlers have made the Hebrew language their own and are bound together and made one by the consciousness that they are doing the national work of Israel. Outside Palestine the call of the national revival has been heard by many to whom Judaism had become a mere survival or a matter of complete indifference; and while Zionism naturally sets up no inquisition over the individual, it remains true that wherever Zionism goes deeper than mere lip-service to a programme, it leads men back to Jewish study, back to the Hebrew language, back to a sense of Jewish values, back to some form or other of real reunion with Jewish tradition and Jewish ideals. On the side of the Jewish people, then, Zionism has done—not, indeed all that needs doing—but a great deal to reawaken the Jewish consciousness where it was latent, and to give it a definite objective where it was in danger of atrophying for the want of one.

But what of Palestine? If Jewish idealism turns more and more irresistibly in that direction, are the conditions such, or likely to become such, that it will be able to achieve positive results? Or is it doomed to expend itself in a futile struggle against realities?

Here we are brought face to face with the "political" aspect of Zionism—that aspect which has been so fruitful of misunderstanding and of calumny.

Zionism demands the development of Palestine by Jewish hands and brains with a view to the creation of the Jewish commonwealth; and it is therefore a question of the first moment to Zionists whether Palestine is or is not open to Jewish immigration and the employment of Jewish capital in the purchase of land and the opening up of the country in every possible way. For that reason Zionism is necessarily interested in the political position of Palestine, and in certain circumstances it is bound to concentrate a good deal of its attention on the political

problem. At the present time, for instance, when the political future of Palestine is bound to become in the near future a question for the world's statesmen, Zionists would be guilty of criminal folly if they did not do all in their power to secure that such conditions shall be established as will be most favourable to the building up of the Jewish commonwealth. Those conditions obviously include immunity from external attack, security of life and property, impartial administration of justice, and explicit recognition of Palestine as the home-land of the Jewish people. How these conditions will best be secured is a question into which it is unnecessary here to enter. But nobody can refuse to Zionists the right to attempt to win sympathy for their aims from all who may have a voice in determining the future of Palestine; and in the presentation of Zionist aims to the world it is necessary to bring out certain considerations which do not spring from Jewish nationalism itself, but have their roots in that complex of ideals, ambitions, friendships, and rivalries which we call "international politics." Considerations of this order are the commercial and strategic importance of Palestine; the desirability of taking Palestine out of the cock-pit of international jealousies; the rights of the Jewish people as a "small nation"; the ability of the Jews, once re-established as a nation in Palestine, to perform a civilising mission in the East and to serve as a harmonising medium between East and West; the beneficial effect of the re-establishment of Jewish national life in Palestine on the "Jewish problem" in those countries in which it is acute; and so forth. All these considerations are not of the essence of Jewish nationalism; if none of them existed (and the task of Zionism would be easier if some of them did not exist), the need for a unifying centre of Jewry and Judaism would be none the less urgent. But in the actual circumstances they are relevant to the problem with which Zionism is concerned, and the fact that Zionism makes legitimate use of them does not affect its underlying aims in the slightest degree. Political conditions may change a hundred times, but the "eternal people" and its eternal ideals remain.

Zionism, then, has to take account of international politics in order to secure such conditions in Palestine as will enable it to realize its aims most securely and most quickly. The

present moment seems propitious. In many countries both the government and public opinion are better informed than ever before about the meaning and the aims of Zionism, and the sympathy of the gentile stands in marked contrast to the hostility of a small but noisy section of Jews. Zionism needs and values that sympathy, not because it holds out the promise of some fifth-rate "Jewish State," but because it foreshadows the possibility of resuming in the near future, under better auspices and with more assured steps, the interrupted work of building up in Palestine the foundations of the Jewish commonwealth—that commonwealth which will become in time the nerve-centre of Jewry and the visible embodiment of the Jewish attitude to life, and through which Israel will become a more effective force making for civilization, for progress, for righteousness.

It is in the light of this vision of Israel re-inspired and inspiring anew, and not under the sway of petty political ambitions, that Zionists have worked for a generation, and will continue to work, despite the many obstacles in their path, despite the indifference of some and the calumnies of others. The pace of their work will be quickened if calumny can be silenced and indifference turned into active help. Theirs is a task which needs the energies of the whole of Israel. But quickly or slowly, easily or with difficulty, their work will proceed till it is accomplished. "You are not bound to complete the work; but you are not free to desist from it."

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